

WILLINGHAM BUCKINGHAM LEIALOHA

# FABLES™

**VERTIGO**

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SUGGESTED FOR  
MATURE READERS  
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JO  
J4





WHY DO YOU LEAVE ME ALONE IN HERE, BIGBY?

I'M NOT BUILT FOR SOLITUDE.

WHEN WE'RE FINISHED FOR THE NIGHT, IT WOULDN'T TAKE YOU ANY EFFORT AT ALL TO PUT ME BACK WITH MY BROTHERS.

YOU CAN GO BACK IN THE HEAD ROOM WHEN YOU'RE DONE SPILLING YOUR GUTS, AND NOT A SECOND BEFORE.

WHINE AND CRY ALL YOU LIKE, ARLO, BUT YOUR FATE'S ENTIRELY IN YOUR OWN ABSENT HANDS.

THE SOONER YOU TELL ALL, THE SOONER YOUR ISOLATION ENDS.

FINE. THEN LET'S GET ON WITH IT.

# THE LONG & HARD FALL

In which jobs and apartments are handed off, characters are forced to begin new chapters in their lives and a severed, splintered head tells all.

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WHERE WERE WE WHEN WE FINISHED YESTER-DAY?

THE GATES.

OH YEAH, THE GATES.

FATHER ORDERED ALL OF THE GATES TO THIS WORLD CLOSED, AS QUICKLY AS WE COULD FIND THEM.

HE'S PARANOID ABOUT AN ATTACK FROM THE MUNDY WORLD.



OR WORSE, A SECRET INFLUX OF MUNDY TECHNOLOGY.

THAT WOULD PLAY HAVOC WITH THE DELICATE STATUS QHO.



AN EMPIRE RULED BY A MAGIC ELITE DOESN'T NEED MODERN WEAPONS. THAT SUDDENLY PUTS ANY LOWLY PEASANT ON THE SAME LEVEL AS ONE OF OUR TOP COMBAT WARLOCKS.

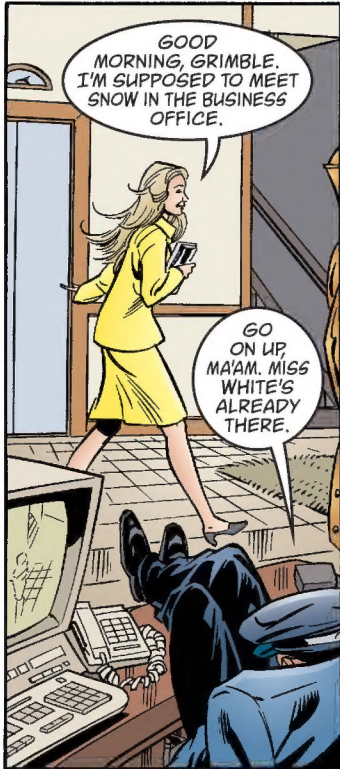
NO DRAGON'S A MATCH FOR A FIGHTER JET, RIGHT?



IT'S ALL ABOUT THE GUNS, DON'T YOU SEE?

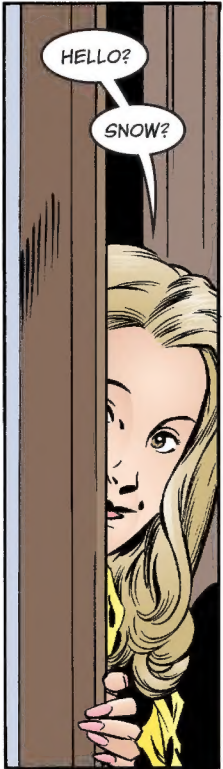
ALL MODERN TECHNOLOGY, IN FACT, SINCE IT TENDS TO LIBERATE ONE FROM A REMOTE, CONTROLLING AUTHORITY.





GOOD MORNING, GRIMBLE. I'M SUPPOSED TO MEET SNOW IN THE BUSINESS OFFICE.

GO ON UP MA'AM. MISS WHITE'S ALREADY THERE.



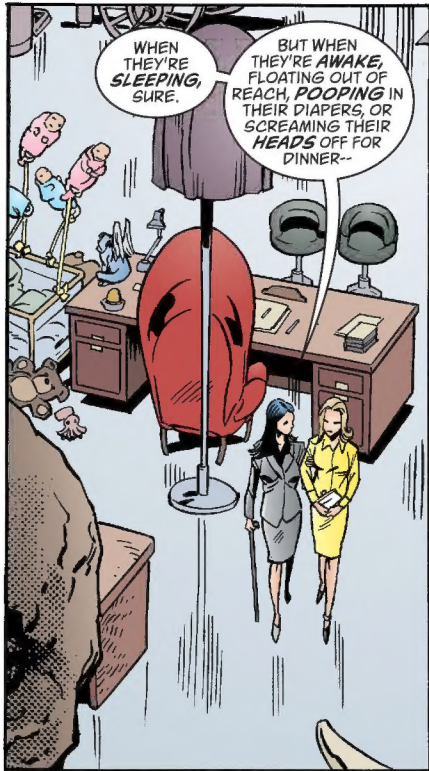
HELLO?  
SNOW?



SHHHHHHH!  
BEAUTY...  
...YOU'LL WAKE THE BABIES.

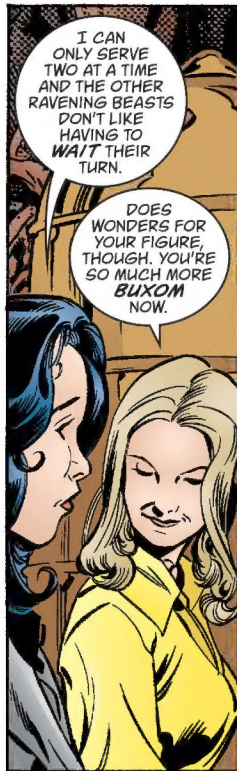


I FINALLY GOT THEM PUT DOWN AFTER THEIR MORNING FEEDING.  
OKAY, NOT ACTUALLY PUT DOWN, BUT--  
THEY'RE MORE ADORABLE EVERY DAY.



WHEN THEY'RE SLEEPING, SURE.

BUT WHEN THEY'RE AWAKE, FLOATING OUT OF REACH, POOPING IN THEIR DIAPERS, OR SCREAMING THEIR HEADS OFF FOR DINNER--



I CAN ONLY SERVE TWO AT A TIME AND THE OTHER RAVENING BEASTS DON'T LIKE HAVING TO WAIT THEIR TURN.

DOES WONDERS FOR YOUR FIGURE, THOUGH. YOU'RE SO MUCH MORE BUXOM NOW.



I'LL BET IT IMPROVES THE HELL OUT OF YOUR SEX LIFE.

UHM... MAYBE WE SHOULD GET STARTED I GO TO THE FARM AT THE END OF THE MONTH, AND YOU HAVE QUITE A BIT TO LEARN BEFORE THEN.

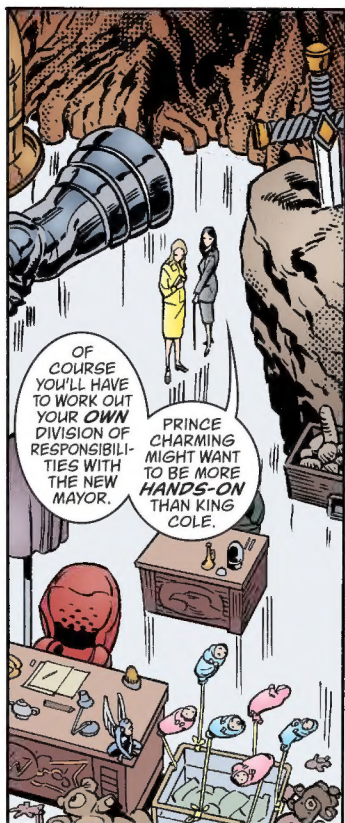


FIRST OF ALL, I ADVISE YOU TO KEEP BOTH BLUE AND BUFKIN ON. THEY'RE INVALUABLE.

BETWEEN THE TWO OF THEM, THEY KNOW WHERE EVERYTHING IS AND EVERYTHING THAT NEEDS TO BE DONE TO KEEP THE DAY-TO-DAY TASKS RUNNING SMOOTHLY.

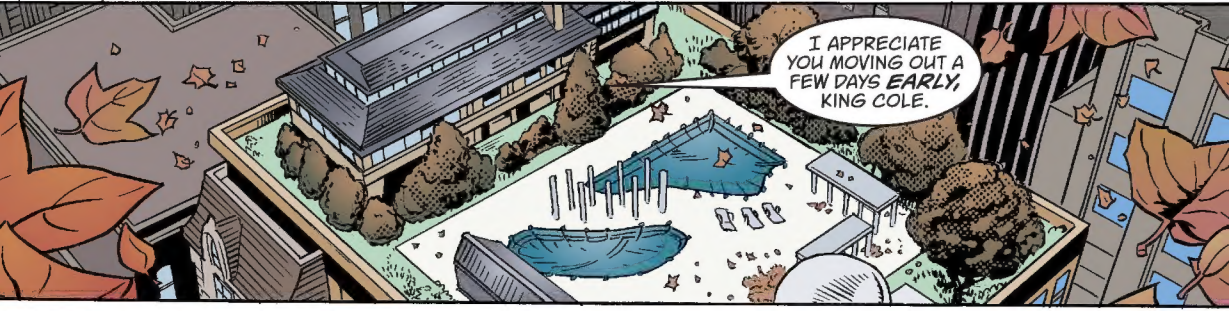


THAT LEAVES YOU FREE TO DEAL WITH ANY CRISIS THAT COMES UP AND, BELIEVE ME, THEY DO COME UP, WITH ALARMING FREQUENCY.



OF COURSE YOU'LL HAVE TO WORK OUT YOUR OWN DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES WITH THE NEW MAYOR.

PRINCE CHARMING MIGHT WANT TO BE MORE HANDS-ON THAN KING COLE.



I APPRECIATE YOU MOVING OUT A FEW DAYS EARLY, KING COLE.



GLAD TO BE OF HELP.

I WANT TO BE ALL MOVED IN BEFORE INAUGURATION DAY, SO WE CAN HAVE OUR AFTER-PARTY UP HERE.



ONCE HIS FURNISHINGS ARE OUT, I'LL WANT ALL NEW FURNITURE PURCHASED. LOTS OF LEATHER AND SUCH.

BUT LET'S NOT EXCLUDE ANY OF THE REALLY VALUABLE PIECES WE CAN CONFISCATE FROM BLUEBEARD'S ESTATE.



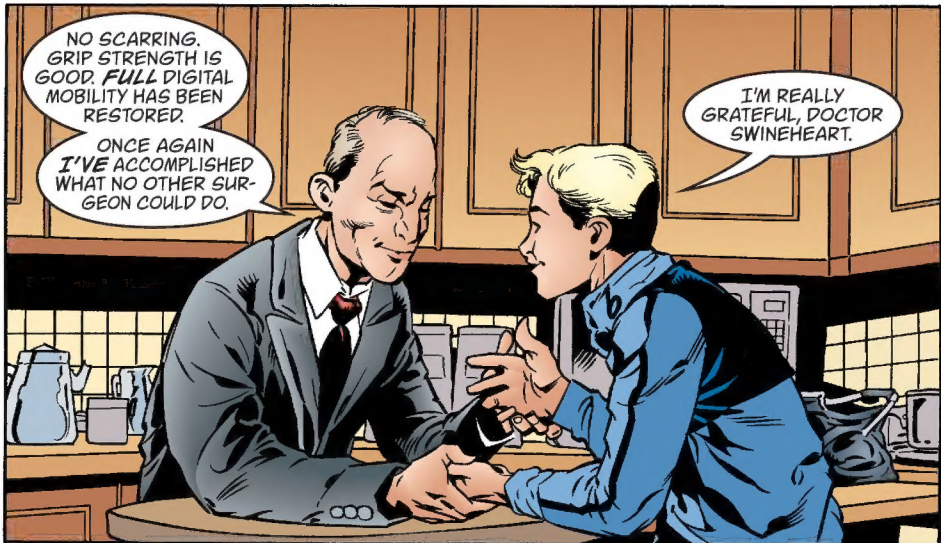
AND THE OLD SWIMMING POOL HAS TO GO. I WANT A LARGER, MORE ELEGANT POOL BUILT IN ITS PLACE.

THOUGH WE'LL PROBABLY HAVE TO WAIT OUT THE WINTER BEFORE WORK CAN BEGIN.

GOT ALL THAT, HOBBS?

YES, Y'GRACE.

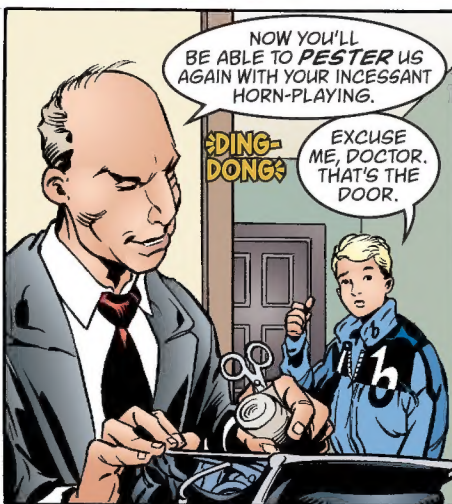




NO SCARRING. GRIP STRENGTH IS GOOD. **FULL** DIGITAL MOBILITY HAS BEEN RESTORED.

ONCE AGAIN I'VE ACCOMPLISHED WHAT NO OTHER SURGEON COULD DO.

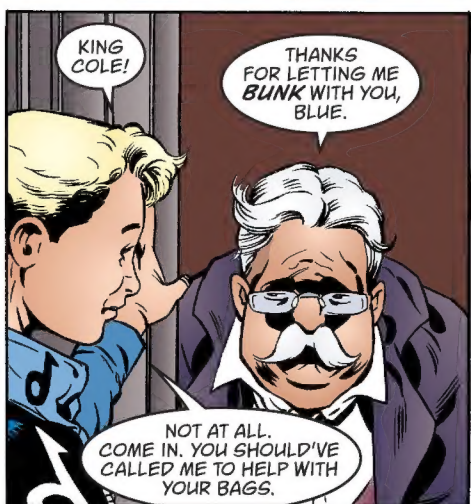
I'M REALLY GRATEFUL, DOCTOR SWINEHEART.



NOW YOU'LL BE ABLE TO PESTER US AGAIN WITH YOUR INCESSANT HORN-PLAYING.

**DING-DONG!**

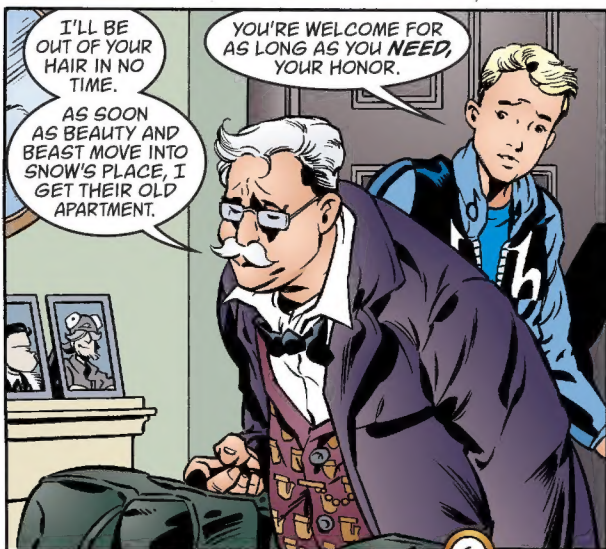
EXCUSE ME, DOCTOR. THAT'S THE DOOR.



KING COLE!

THANKS FOR LETTING ME BUNK WITH YOU, BLUE.

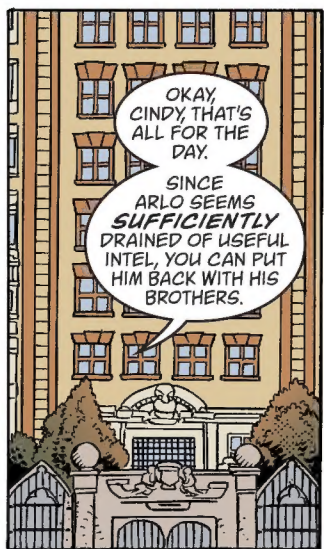
NOT AT ALL. COME IN. YOU SHOULD'VE CALLED ME TO HELP WITH YOUR BAGS.



I'LL BE OUT OF YOUR HAIR IN NO TIME.

AS SOON AS BEAUTY AND BEAST MOVE INTO SNOW'S PLACE, I GET THEIR OLD APARTMENT.

YOU'RE WELCOME FOR AS LONG AS YOU NEED, YOUR HONOR.



OKAY, CINDY, THAT'S ALL FOR THE DAY.

SINCE ARLO SEEMS **SUFFICIENTLY** DRAINED OF USEFUL INTEL, YOU CAN PUT HIM BACK WITH HIS BROTHERS.







MOSTLY IT'S ABOUT LEARNING WHAT SECRETS YOU NEED TO KEEP, EVEN FROM YOUR OWN BOSSES.

YOU'LL HAVE TO CULTIVATE SOME SUBTLE JUDGMENT ON WHAT THEY SHOULD KNOW AND WHAT THEY'RE BETTER OFF NEVER KNOWING.



WHERE ARE WE GOING, BIGBY? THIS ISN'T THE WAY BACK TO THE BUSINESS OFFICE.

I FIGURE YOU'VE EARNED AT LEAST *SOME* CONSIDERATION.



COME WITH ME, MR. BEAST, AND I'LL SHOW YOU ONE OF THOSE *BIG* HIDDEN THINGS YOU CAN NEVER TELL ANYONE--NOT EVEN YOUR *WIFE*.

BUT SHE'S ABOUT TO BE THE DEPUTY MAYOR. MY DIRECT *SUPERIOR*.

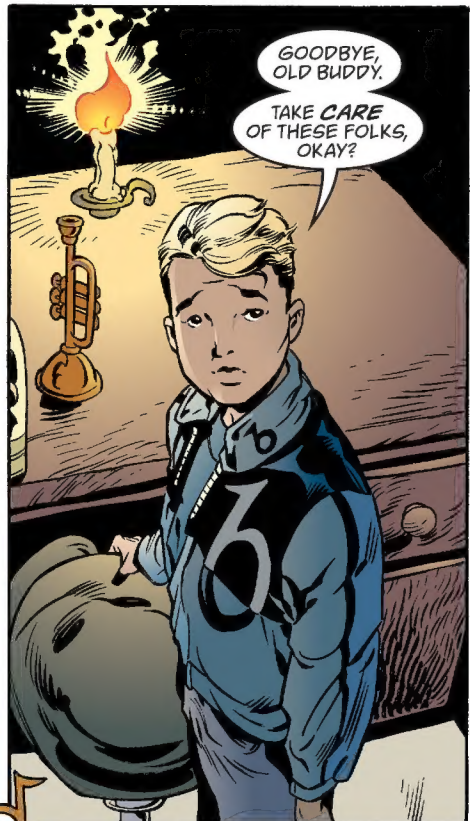


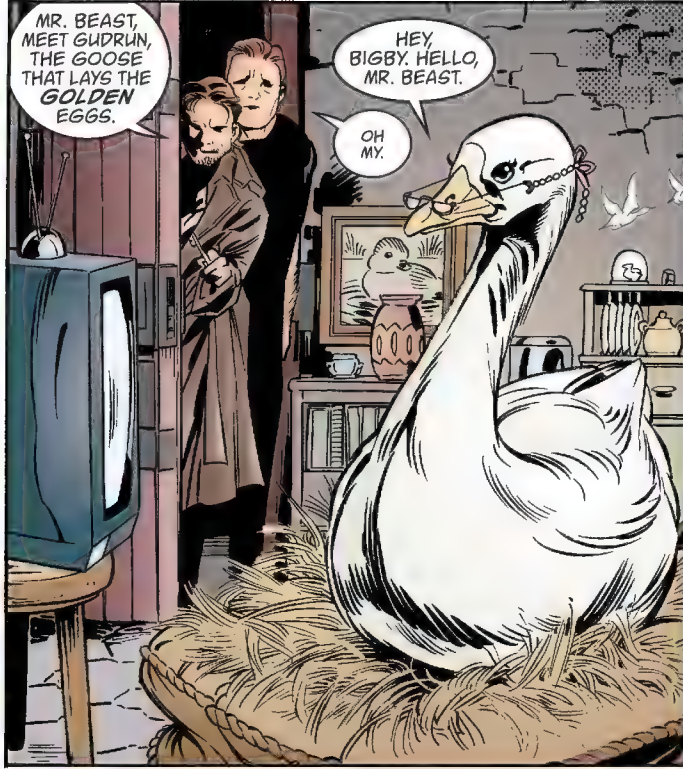
RIGHT. THINK OF THIS AS MY TEST TO SEE IF YOU HAVE THE STRENGTH AND BACKBONE TO CARRY THOSE BURDENS YOU HAVE TO CARRY *ALONE*.



PART OF WHY FABLETOWN WORKED SO WELL IN THE PAST IS THAT I WAS WILLING TO DO ALL THE *DARK* THINGS SNOW AND KING COLE SHOULDN'T HAVE TO KNOW ABOUT, AND WOULDN'T WANT TO KNOW ABOUT.

HOW FABLETOWN WORKS IN THE FUTURE IS SUBSTANTIALLY UP TO *YOUR* ABILITY TO DO THE SAME.

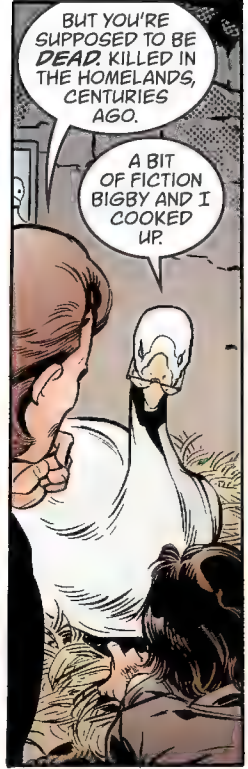




MR. BEAST, MEET GUDRUN, THE GOOSE THAT LAYS THE GOLDEN EGGS.

HEY, BIGBY. HELLO, MR. BEAST.

OH MY.



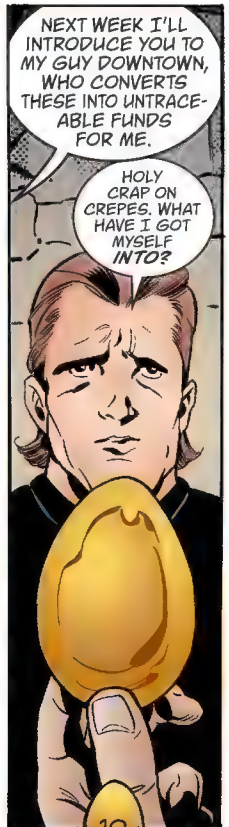
BUT YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE DEAD, KILLED IN THE HOMELANDS, CENTURIES AGO.

A BIT OF FICTION BIGBY AND I COOKED UP.



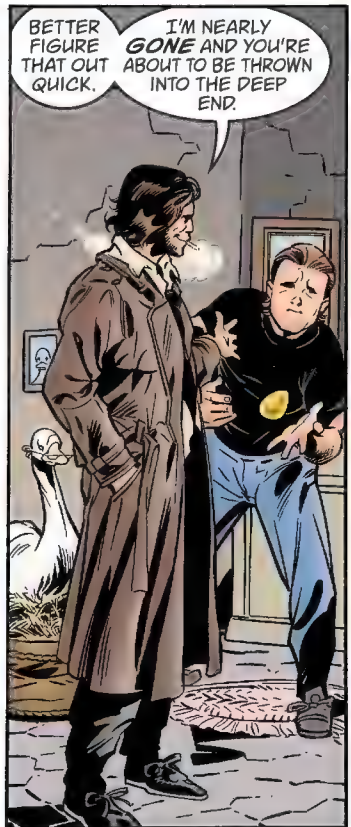
WHY?

BECAUSE GUDRUN'S GOLDEN EGGS ARE HOW I FINANCE MY UNAUTHORIZED OPERATIONS--AND HOW YOU'LL DO IT FROM NOW ON.



NEXT WEEK I'LL INTRODUCE YOU TO MY GUY DOWNTOWN, WHO CONVERTS THESE INTO UNTRACEABLE FUNDS FOR ME.

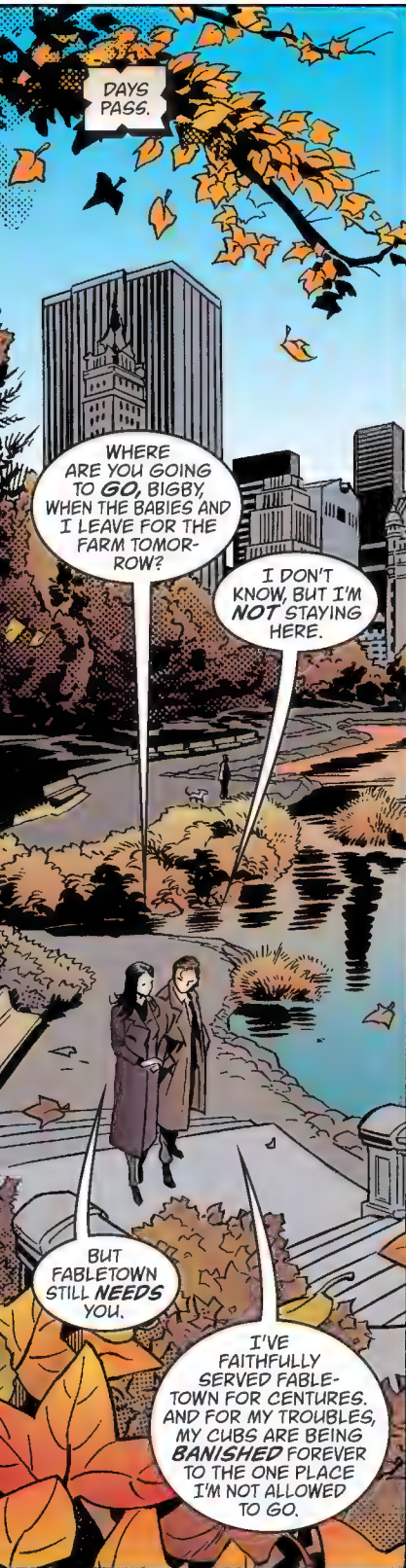
HOLY CRAP ON CREPES. WHAT HAVE I GOT MYSELF INTO?



BETTER FIGURE THAT OUT QUICK.

I'M NEARLY GONE AND YOU'RE ABOUT TO BE THROWN INTO THE DEEP END.





DAYS  
PASS.

WHERE  
ARE YOU GOING  
TO **GO**, BIGBY,  
WHEN THE BABIES  
AND I LEAVE FOR THE  
FARM TOMOR-  
ROW?

I DON'T  
KNOW, BUT I'M  
**NOT** STAYING  
HERE.

I  
KNOW IT  
STINKS,  
BUT--

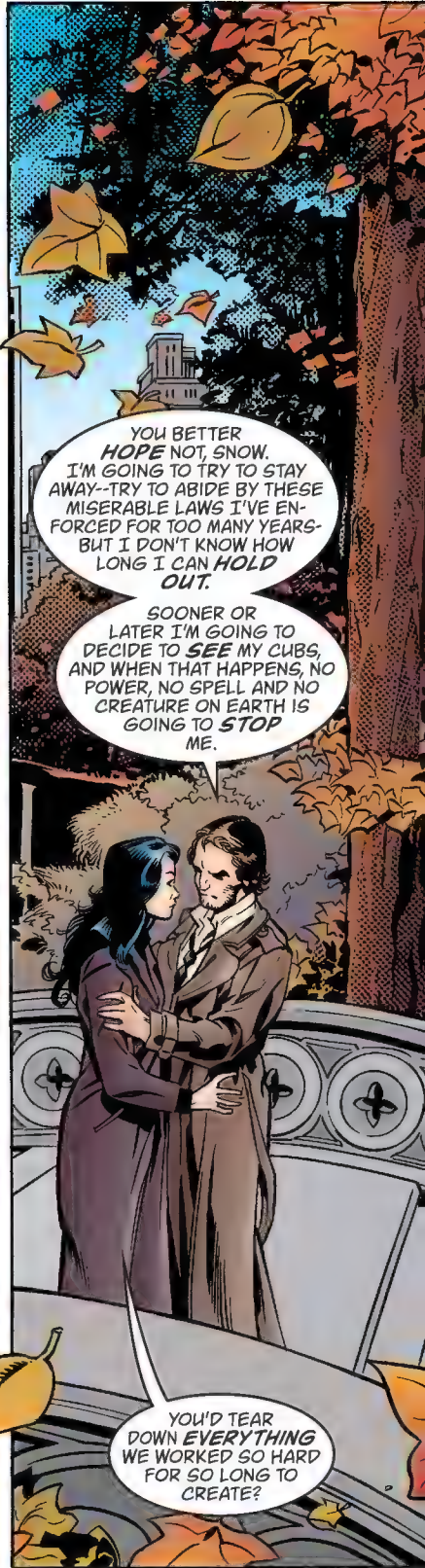
I'VE  
DONE MY PART,  
AND MORE. THAT'S  
ENOUGH. IT'S TIME  
FOR **OTHERS** TO  
TAKE THEIR  
TURN.

BUT  
FABLETOWN  
STILL **NEEDS**  
YOU.

I'VE  
FAITHFULLY  
SERVED FABLE-  
TOWN FOR CENTURES.  
AND FOR MY TROUBLES,  
MY CUBS ARE BEING  
**BANISHED** FOREVER  
TO THE ONE PLACE  
I'M **NOT** ALLOWED  
TO GO.



WILL WE  
**EVER** SEE YOU  
AGAIN?



YOU BETTER  
**HOPE** NOT, SNOW.  
I'M GOING TO TRY TO STAY  
AWAY--TRY TO ABIDE BY THESE  
MISERABLE LAWS I'VE EN-  
FORCED FOR TOO MANY YEARS--  
BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW  
LONG I CAN **HOLD**  
**OUT**.

SOONER OR  
LATER I'M GOING TO  
DECIDE TO **SEE** MY CUBS,  
AND WHEN THAT HAPPENS, NO  
POWER, NO SPELL AND NO  
CREATURE ON EARTH IS  
GOING TO **STOP**  
ME.

YOU'D TEAR  
DOWN **EVERYTHING**  
WE WORKED SO HARD  
FOR SO LONG TO  
CREATE?





WHAT WE CREATED, SNOW, ARE THOSE *KIDS* YOU'RE ABOUT TO TAKE AWAY FROM ME.

THEY'RE ALL THAT *MATTERS* NOW. ANY DUTIES I STILL HAVE BELONG SOLELY TO THEM.



THEN HOW DO WE *FIX* THIS?

EASY. DON'T GO TO THE FARM. COME AWAY WITH ME.



THERE ARE STILL FORESTS IN THIS WORLD WHERE NO ONE WILL EVER FIND US.

WE'D BE FREE TO RAISE OUR FAMILY WITHOUT INTERFERENCE FROM FABLE OR MUNDY.



OH, BIGBY, I COULDN'T POSSIBLY--

I CAN'T *BETRAY* FABLETOWN, AND I COULDN'T LIVE THAT WAY.



OF COURSE NOT. FOR ALL YOUR GRIPING ABOUT HOW ILL-USED YOU WERE, YOU STILL CLING TO YOUR *FANTASIES* OF CASTLES AND PRINCES.

WHERE *DOGS* KNOW THEIR PLACE-- IN THE KENNELS.



AND THE FOLLOWING MORNING...

YOU LOOK AFTER THOSE **KIDS** NOW. DON'T LET THEM FLY OUT OF THE CAR ON THE WAY UP.

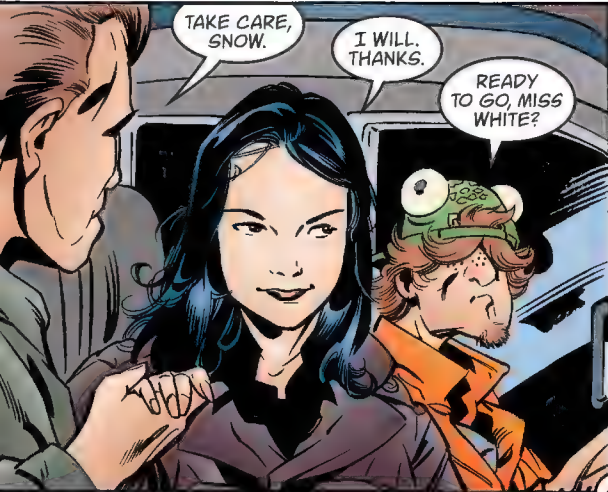
THEY'LL BE STRAPPED INTO THEIR CAR SEATS THE WHOLE WAY.

HERE'S THE NEXT ONE.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT US. WE'LL DO FINE.

STAY SAFE, SNOWDROP.

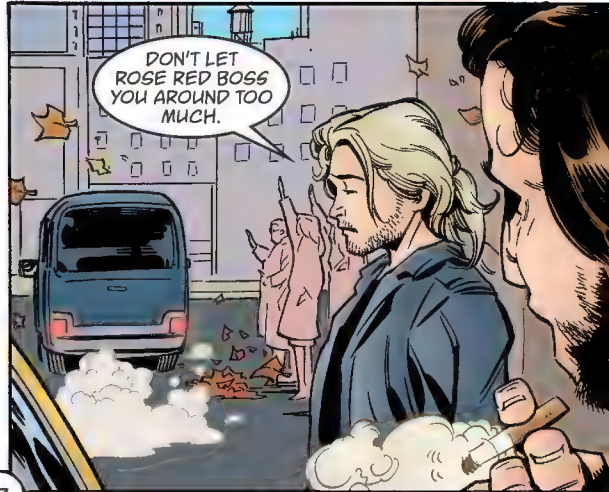
I'LL HAVE YOU PACKED AND ON YOUR WAY IN A JIFF, MISS WHITE.



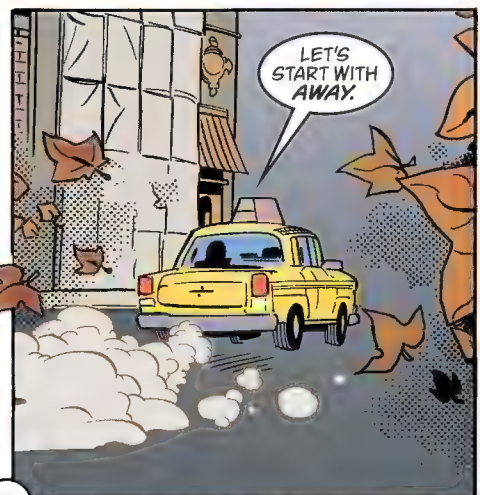
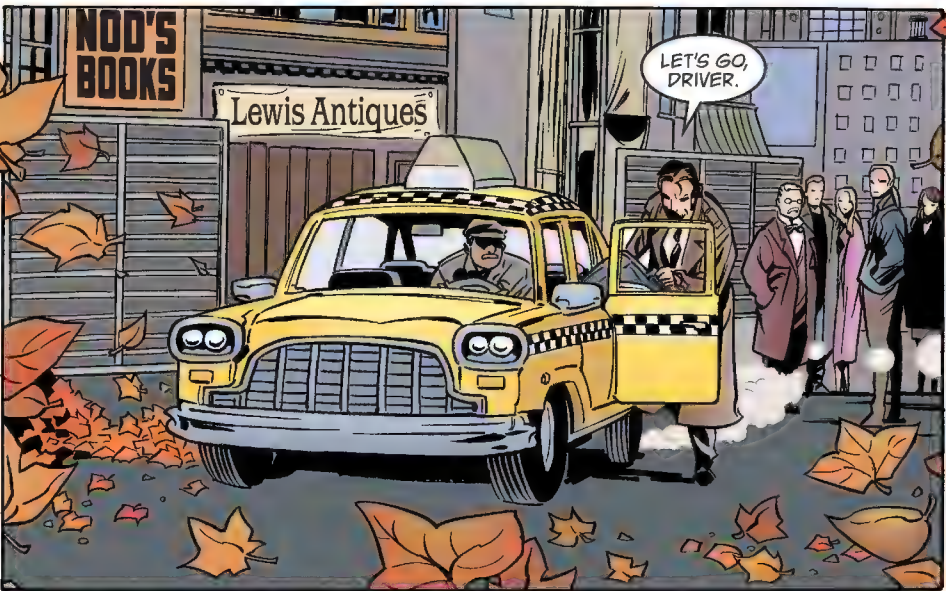
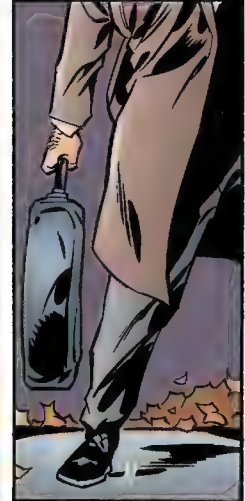
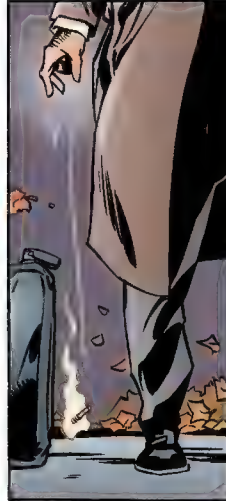
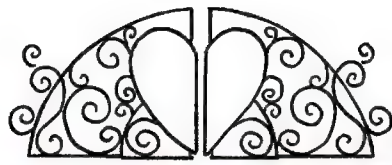
TAKE CARE, SNOW.

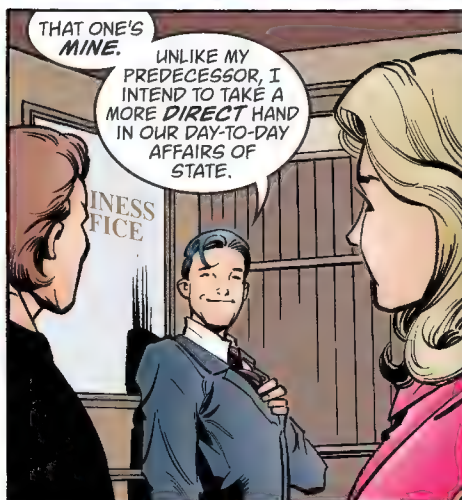
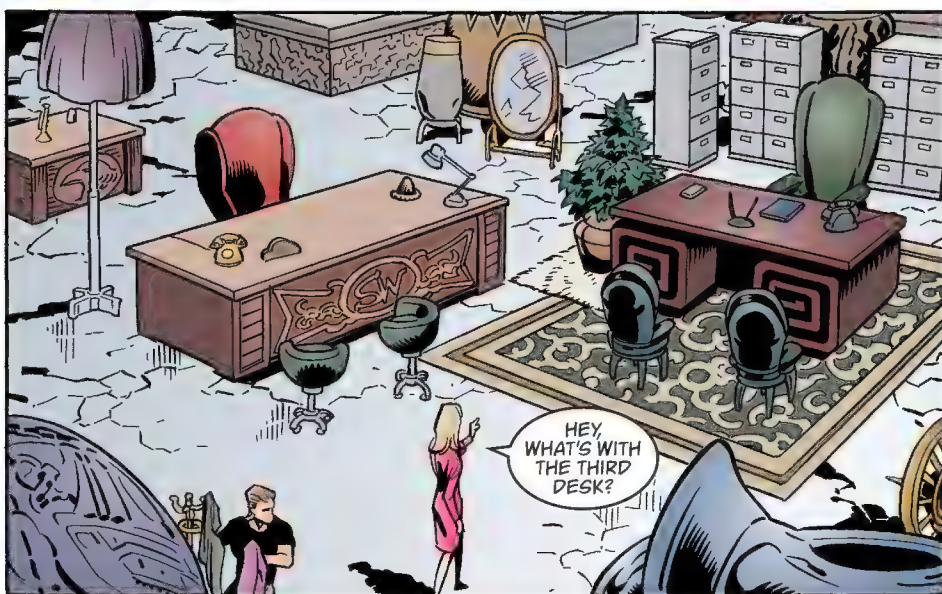
I WILL. THANKS.

READY TO GO, MISS WHITE?



DON'T LET ROSE RED BOSS YOU AROUND TOO MUCH.









AND NEAR THE  
END OF THAT  
DAY...

WELCOME TO  
YOUR NEW HOME,  
SNOW!

WE'VE  
PREPARED A BIG  
CELEBRATION IN THE  
BARN TONIGHT, MISS  
WHITE!

Welcome  
Snow

WITH  
BOBBING FOR  
APPLES!

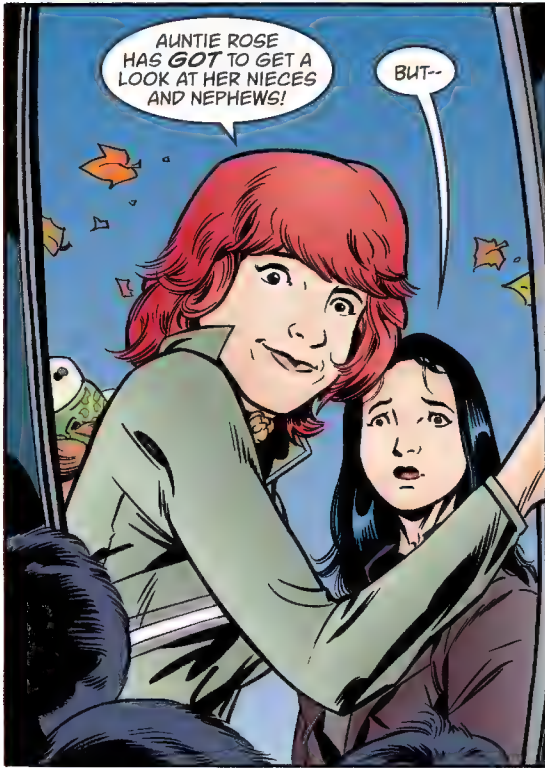
AND  
HARD  
CIDER!

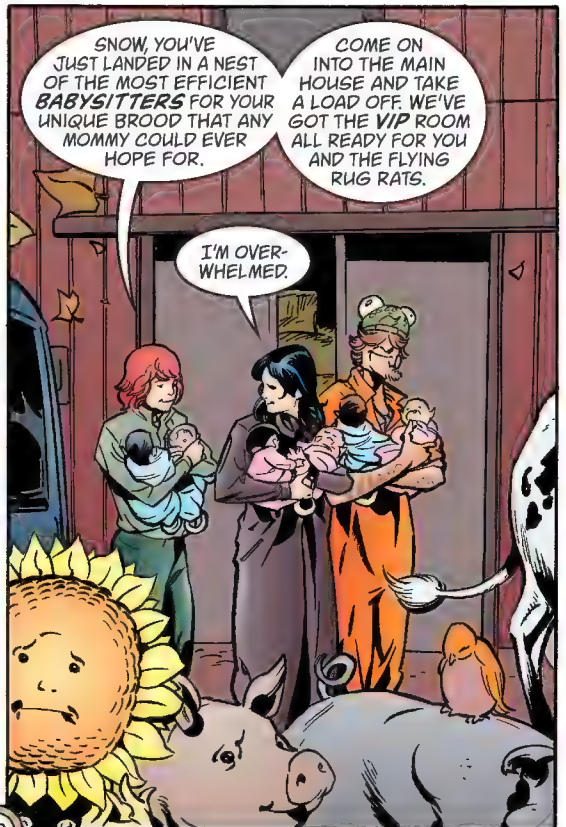
YEAH,  
SO GET READY  
FOR LOTS OF DRINKING  
AND KISSING BEHIND  
THE HAYSTACKS,  
SNOW.

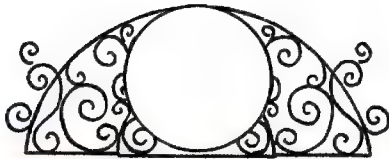
THAT WILL  
BE WONDERFUL,  
BUT--

YOU LOOK  
GREAT, SIS!  
POSITIVELY  
FAB!

BUT  
STAND  
ASIDE THIS  
INSTANT!



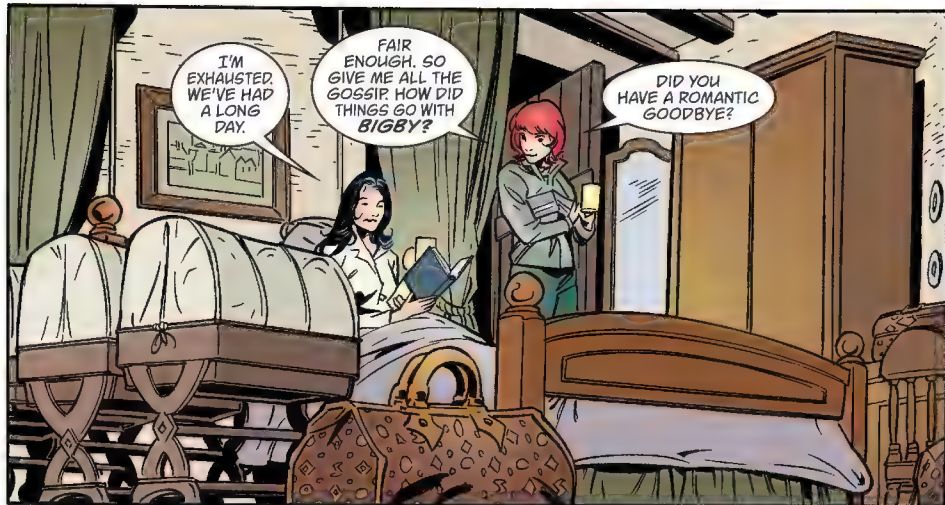




THERE YOU ARE!



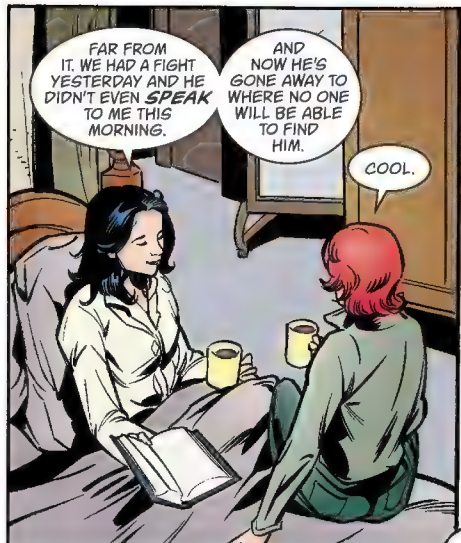
YOU SNUCK OUT EARLY. THE PARTY'S ONLY GETTING STARTED.



I'M EXHAUSTED. WE'VE HAD A LONG DAY.

FAIR ENOUGH. SO GIVE ME ALL THE GOSSIP. HOW DID THINGS GO WITH **BIGBY**?

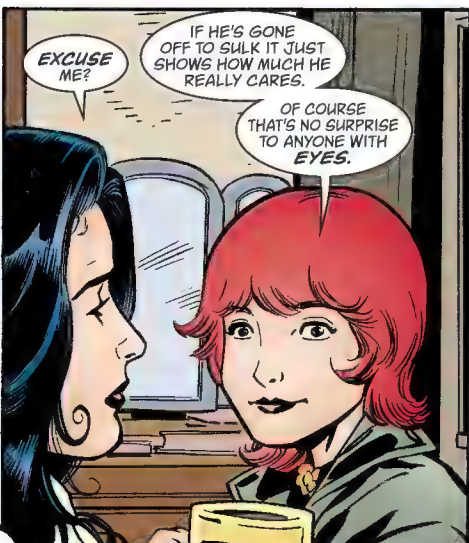
DID YOU HAVE A ROMANTIC GOODBYE?



FAR FROM IT. WE HAD A FIGHT YESTERDAY AND HE DIDN'T EVEN **SPEAK** TO ME THIS MORNING.

AND NOW HE'S GONE AWAY TO WHERE NO ONE WILL BE ABLE TO FIND HIM.

COOL.

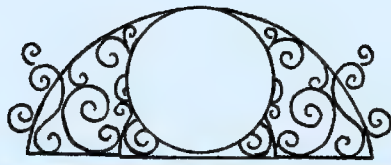


EXCUSE ME?

IF HE'S GONE OFF TO SULK IT JUST SHOWS HOW MUCH HE REALLY CARES.

OF COURSE THAT'S NO SURPRISE TO ANYONE WITH **EYES**.

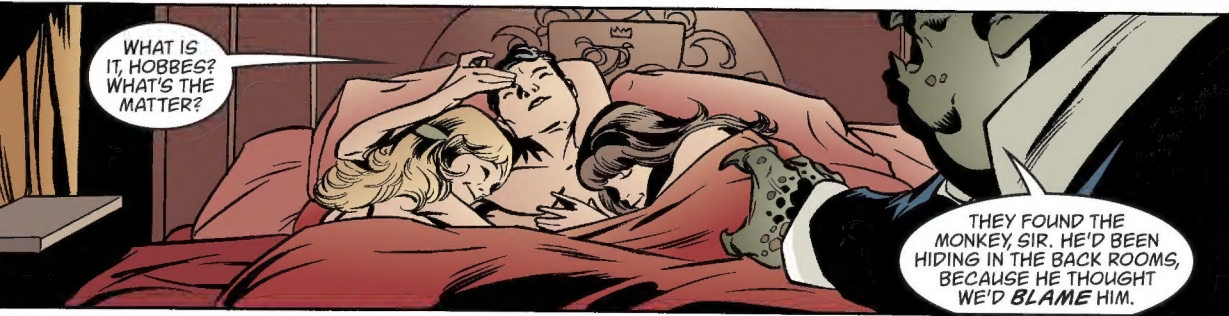






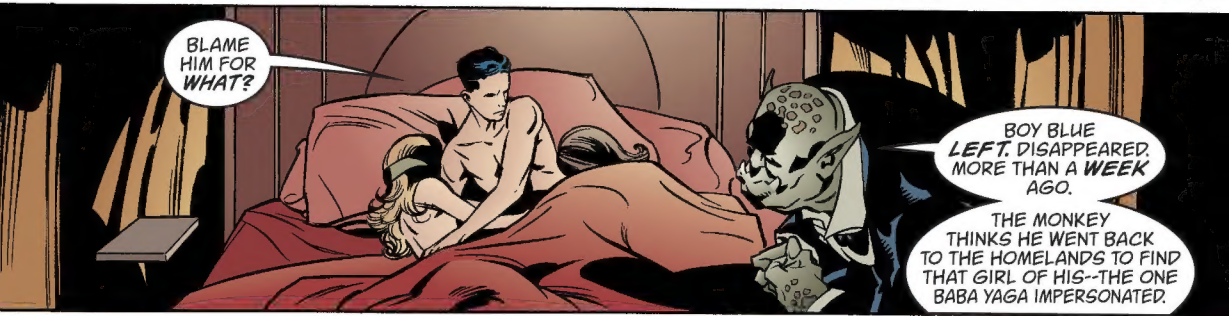
PRINCE CHARMING?

YOUR HONOR, YOU HAVE TO WAKE UP.



WHAT IS IT, HOBBS? WHAT'S THE MATTER?

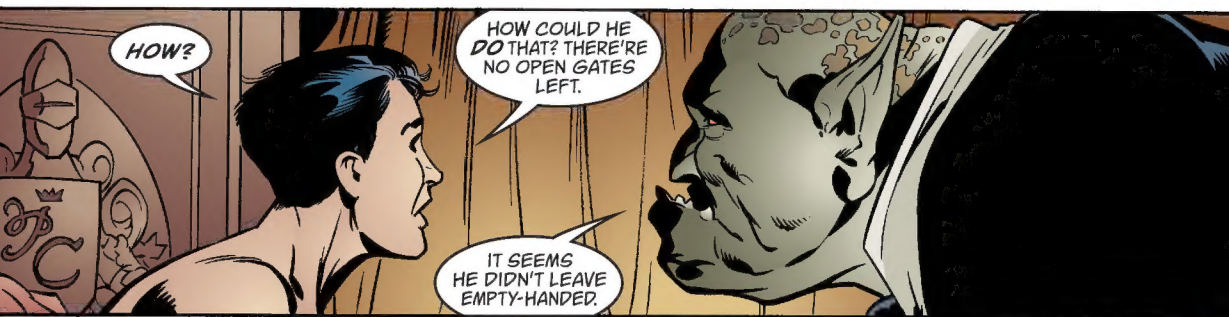
THEY FOUND THE MONKEY, SIR. HE'D BEEN HIDING IN THE BACK ROOMS, BECAUSE HE THOUGHT WE'D *BLAME* HIM.



BLAME HIM FOR WHAT?

BOY BLUE LEFT. DISAPPEARED. MORE THAN A WEEK AGO.

THE MONKEY THINKS HE WENT BACK TO THE HOMELANDS TO FIND THAT GIRL OF HIS--THE ONE BABA YAGA IMPERSONATED.



HOW?

HOW COULD HE DO THAT? THERE'RE NO OPEN GATES LEFT.

IT SEEMS HE DIDN'T LEAVE EMPTY-HANDED.



HE STOLE THE WITCHING CLOAK.

ALSO THE VORPAL SWORD AND PINOCCHIO'S BODY.

THEY'RE CHECKING NOW TO SEE IF ANYTHING ELSE IS MISSING.



SNOW,  
I'M HERE.

DID  
YOU WANT TO  
TALK?



COLIN?  
IS THAT  
YOU?

SHHHHH.

DON'T  
WAKE THE  
BABIES.



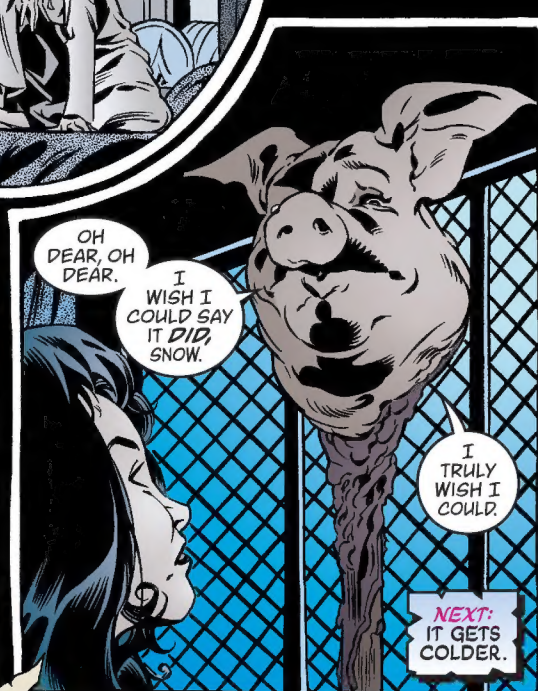
THEY  
CAN'T HEAR US.  
YOU'RE STILL  
SLEEPING.

OH--  
OKAY.



SO YOU  
CALLED ME INTO  
YOUR DREAM. WHAT  
DID YOU WANT TO  
ASK?

COLIN, IS  
THE BAD PART OVER?  
DO THINGS GET ANY  
BETTER NOW?



OH  
DEAR, OH  
DEAR.

I  
WISH I  
COULD SAY  
IT DID,  
SNOW.

I  
TRULY  
WISH I  
COULD.

**NEXT:**  
IT GETS  
COLDER.

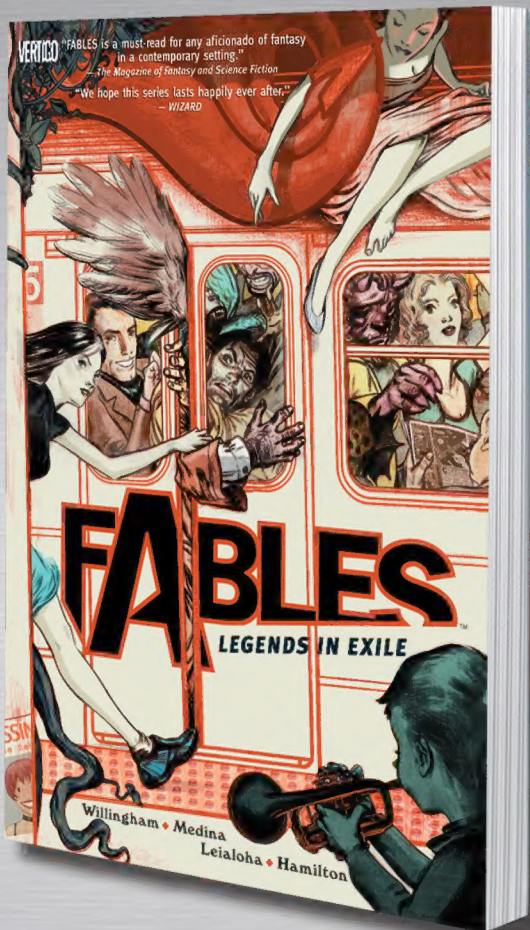
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# BILL WILLINGHAM

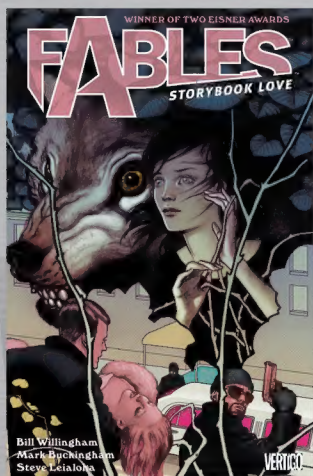
*"[A] wonderfully twisted concept... features fairy tale characters banished to the noirish world of present-day New York."*  
– THE WASHINGTON POST



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- VOL. 8: WOLVES
- VOL. 9: SONS OF EMPIRE
- VOL. 10: THE GOOD PRINCE
- VOL. 11: WAR AND PIECES
- VOL. 12: THE DARK AGES
- VOL. 13: THE GREAT FABLES CROSSOVER
- 1001 NIGHTS OF SNOWFALL



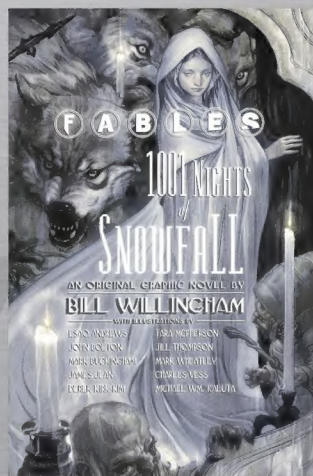
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NATHAN